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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-first year

Identical letters dated 3 July 2006 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Israel, the occupying Power, continues with its aggression of military raids and assaults on Palestinian cities and towns in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, endangering the lives of the defenceless Palestinian civilian population and causing further destruction to Palestinian property and infrastructure, in flagrant violation and grave breach of the relevant rules and provisions of international law.

Recent statements and declarations by Israeli officials indicate the occupying Power's intention to continue and escalate this violent military and terror campaign against the Palestinian people and their leadership. In addition, the occupying Power continues to detain those elected Palestinian officials it kidnapped last week, severely undermining the functioning of the Palestinian Authority and exacerbating already high tensions. Such ongoing attacks by Israel, in addition to its incessant provocations and incitement, portend the continued steep decline of the situation on the ground in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip, and the perpetuation of the deadly cycle of violence reignited by the occupying Power, with undoubtedly dire consequences for the very fragile security situation and the grave humanitarian conditions on the ground.

In this regard, I regret to inform you that the Israeli occupying forces have continued to attack areas in the Gaza Strip by missile air strikes launched from warplanes and helicopter gunships as well as by artillery bombardment launched from tanks and gunboats, causing further destruction to properties and infrastructure, including a school and several main roads. Yesterday, the occupying forces also continued their targeting of elected Palestinian officials and government institutions, striking the offices of the Palestinian Prime Minister, Mr. Ismail Haniyeh, in Gaza City with missiles and causing severe damage to the building. Air strikes were also carried out in other areas, including in Beit Lahiya and Beit Hanoun, resulting in the killing of at least two Palestinian men and the wounding of several other Palestinians, including a man inside his own home in Beit Hanoun. Israeli troops remain in the

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southern Gaza Strip as well as along the northern Gaza border and actually crossed into northern Gaza today with tanks and bulldozers, threatening to widen the military campaign and causing rising fears, trauma and panic among the Palestinian civilian population in the area.

Despite all such violent and unlawful Israeli actions, the Palestinian leadership continues to exert efforts to diplomatically address the prevailing crisis and to promote calm, with absolutely no reciprocation by the occupying Power. In this regard, it must be clearly reiterated that there is no military solution to this crisis and that the continuing military assaults by the Israeli occupying forces against the Palestinian people and their leadership will only further exacerbate the situation, gravely endanger civilian lives and cause even more humanitarian suffering, destruction and loss. Additionally, the persistence of illegal and irrational actions by the occupying Power, including the ongoing threats being declared by Israeli officials, the latest by the Defense Minister himself, against the Syrian Arab Republic following Israel's violation of Syrian airspace last week, are causing the greater destabilization of the situation in the area and threaten the security of the entire region.

The international community must continue to exert efforts to address this critical situation, aimed at averting its further deterioration, in order to save the lives of innocent and defenceless civilians and to save the two sides, as well as the region as a whole, from plunging into an irrevocable cycle of violence. The international community, including the Security Council of the United Nations, cannot abandon its responsibilities in the face of this rising threat to the already too fragile, tense and instable security situation in the Middle East. In this regard, we reiterate that Israel's aggression and illegal practices against the Palestinian people and their leadership should be strongly condemned and that Israel should be demanded to abide by all of its obligations under international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention. Serious efforts should be undertaken to compel the occupying Power to immediately cease its aggressions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including, inter alia, the immediate cessation of military attacks against the Palestinian civilian population, cessation of the destruction of properties, withdrawal of its forces to outside the Gaza Strip and release of all of the Palestinian officials it has detained, and to give diplomacy a chance to defuse the current crisis.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 250 letters to you regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 29 June 2006 (A/ES-10/342-S/2006/460), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations